



CHIEF OFFICERS' GROUP MEETING

Notes of Meeting 25 April 2024

	Agenda item	EPOA Sponsors/Leads
1.	<p>Apologies Dean Hermitage - Uttlesford Karen Syrett and Simon Cairns – Colchester Katie Fowler – EPOA Training Programme</p> <p>Attendance Christine Lyons – Basildon Alan Massow – Braintree Emma Goodings – Brentwood & Rochford Amanda Parrott – Castle Point Jeremy Potter – Chelmsford Bethany Jones – Chair EPOA Policy Forum – Colchester Graham Thomas – Chair Essex CC Richard Greaves – ECC Nigel Richardson – Epping Liz Beighton – Harlow Matt Winslow - Maldon Kevin Waters – Southend Gary Guiver – Tendring Ashley Baldwin - Thurrock Ann Howell – Uttlesford</p> <p>Guests Paul Wilkinson – EPOA Parking officer lead Alethea Evans – Planning Portfolio Holders meetings</p>	
2.	<p>Welcome Ashley was given a warm welcome to the Chief Officers group, having recently taken up the role of Chief Planner at Thurrock.</p>	
3	<p>EPOA Work Programme - Priorities The meeting considered the EPOA Priorities for 2024/25 – and agreed a number of Task and Finish leads to support the work. The meeting agreed the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EPOA Parking Standards – Jeremy and Emma providing the EPOA Chief Officer leads. • Climate Change/Net Zero – developing a suite of pan-Essex planning policies - Graham, Emma, Kevin, Jeremy, and Amanda working with the pan-Essex Climate and Planning Unit (CaPU). • Recruitment and Retention – response to the East of England LGA report on Planning in Essex. Kevin leading with Dean Hermitage, Matt Winslow, and Liz Beighton. • Supported and Specialist Housing – Christine Lyons and Gary Guiver offered to lead to work with Jonathan Schiffer and Dale Evans. • EPOA Training – It was agreed that Graham, Kevin, and Matt Winslow will work with Katie Fowler and Jason Yates from Place Services who are helping Lewis Herbert to develop the EPOA training programme for 2024/25. 	<p>Jeremy/Emma</p> <p>Graham</p> <p>Kevin Waters</p> <p>Christine/Gary</p> <p>Kevin/Graham/Matt</p>
4	<p>Parking Standards – Paul Wilkinson provided an update on the work. He explained they are going through the responses submitted, the programme and budget still needed to complete the work. The request made was for an additional £12k was needed to complete the work to achieve a PDF version document. If we wanted a more interactive document this would cost more. ITP are due to publish their report on the consultation responses on 3 May. It was agreed the work would be finalised and brought back to the June meeting for EPOA endorsement.</p> <p>Action Paul to look at the digitisation version of the EPOA Parking standards as a potential bid for DLUHC/DT</p>	<p>Paul Wilkinson</p>

5	<p>Recruitment and Retention – the recent East of England Report LGA report on recruitment and retention identified the scale of the problem faced in Greater Essex in being able to recruit and retain planners. The EELGA and MDC reports were circulated with the agenda.</p> <p>Graham explained that the Essex CEOs’ are interested in this work and expect any subsequent report that goes back to the CEO’s to be made by this group.</p> <p>A number of examples were put forward with using others to help with recruitment at Castle Point, examples of what Hertfordshire are doing and using Public Practice and pathways into planning. There are a number of different examples and a number of routes into planning. The meeting also discussed improving the links to ARU and the London Universities. We also need to link-up with the RTPI to utilise the resources they have available. Action - the next step is to scope the work in response to the LGA report recommendations.</p>	Kevin Waters
6	<p>Update on Gypsy and Traveller work</p> <p>Amanda explained the ORS work has moved very slowly and she will follow-up to chase this along as a number of local authorities are moving forward at pace with their Local Plans and are reliant upon the gypsy and traveller numbers/work. It seems to be the case that a lot of caravans are being rented out in some districts to non – gypsy and traveller families which is presenting problems. In addition to the ORS report, there is a need secure legal advice(£5-6K). This point was agreed but will require a budget.</p> <p>Action: Amanda/Christine agreed to look at individual reports excluding Basildon at this point in time.</p> <p>Action: It was also agreed a meeting with PINS would be helpful and having a generic G&T policy.</p>	Amanda Parrott Amanda Parrott
7	<p>Training</p> <p>EPOA – 30-year Planning Summit – feedback was very positive. Future of EPOA training programme (preferences) It was felt that an in person event was successful could we</p>	Jason Yates Katie Fowler
8	<p>Updates from EPOA forums</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development Management – No update. • Policy Forum – Beth gave an update particularly Amber Nyoni’s health and planning presentation which needed to be shared with the DM Forum. There was good discussion on lessons learnt on IDP’s. • Enforcement – No updates • Admin and support services – No updates • Urban Design 	Sara Beth Katie
9	<p>EPOA fees – 2024/25</p> <p>The EPOA fees for this year were agreed, which will fund the training programme a modest contribution (excluding Thurrock and Southend) for a finalising the EPOA Parking standards, plus a contribution and cover the RAMS training project (£1,600) shortfall. Graham will arrange for purchase orders to be sent.</p>	Graham
10	<p>Planning Portfolio Holders – Meeting and draft agenda</p> <p>Alethea gave an update on the June 24 Planning Portfolio Holders meeting. Agenda items agree EPOA Parking standards, Local Nature Recovery Strategy, Delivering Net Zero Essex. Alethea asked for updates on who any new portfolio holders will be following the local elections. It was considered helpful if the chair give a short introduction and outlines the key areas of work being led by EPOA this year.</p> <p>Action – In relation to the Local Nature Recovery agenda item, Alethea agreed to make Tim aware of some of the sensitivities in relation to urban area which is not currently being addressed. A pre-meeting would be helpful.</p> <p>Action - All to respond directly to Alethea on any changes to portfolio holder.</p>	Alethea Evans
11	<p>Chairman’s Report</p> <p>No issues to report in the first four weeks.</p>	Graham Thomas
12	<p>Updates by exception major appeal/Local Plan/NSIPs etc</p> <p>TCGC – DPD examination to be held in May – Gary Guiver. Minerals Local Plan – 5,000 representations submitted over 50% did not come through the portal. In the future follow-up meeting will be held with local</p>	All

	authorities with regard to commencing statements of common ground conversations. Richard Greaves.	
13	Notes and Actions arising from previous meeting Emma apologised and agreed to circulate.	Emma Goodings
14	AOB <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RAMS – Jeremy referred to the administrative role of managing the RAMs project and wanted to know if there was any interest in managing this. Something to be reconsidered at our next meeting. • Unacceptable Behaviour Protocol – Matt Winslow to be added into the recruitment and retention task and finish work. • Highways Guidance is being updated. Graham requested example where highway and transport guidance needs to be reviewed/amended. This includes maintenance strips which is real cause of concern. Safety audits and adoption standards are a problem and run counter to good place-making. 	All to H&T examples for Graham